

Appendix B:

Instructions for Using the Student Travel Tally Sheet and Parent Survey

Specific instructions on how to administer each tool are below:

If you have any questions, please contact your State SRTS Coordinator or Craig Raborn, Program Manager, National Center for Safe Routes to School, at raborn@unc.edu or (919) 843-5606.

Student Travel Tally Sheet

The Student Travel Tally Sheet is intended to help track the number of children walking and biking to and from school at participating schools. The information will have many applications, including evaluating overall program success, estimating traffic congestion and environmental effects, learning travel patterns, and many more.

This information, when gathered before and after the SRTS activity or project, can help local SRTS programs measure any changes in walking, biking, and other forms of travel to and from school, which are frequently expected measures.

This form is designed so that teachers or parent volunteers can ask their students how they got to school each morning, and how they will get home after school. It should take less than five minutes each morning.

Administration Instructions:

1. The form should be given to all K-8 classrooms in the school, so that as complete a count as possible is achieved.
2. It is intended to be used each day for a one-week period, so that an accurate average of student travel can be determined.
 - a. Weather conditions can be identified after counts are collected. We have found that internet-based weather reporting (for example, on www.weatherunderground.com) is normally more accurate than personal observations.
 - i. Local coordinators can find this information online by time of day and Zip Code at www.weatherunderground.com. (Other weather-related Web sites may also provide this information.)
 - b. For national reporting purposes, counts are needed over a five-day period, regardless of weather conditions.
 - c. In order to know how many students walk when it is not raining, local programs may choose to collect counts on additional days if there were more than two days of rain during the initial week. (For this purpose, the National Center recommends a minimum of three days without precipitation.)

3. The Student Travel Tally Sheet should be administered at least twice during the school year:
 - a. First, counts should be taken at some point during the second, third, or fourth weeks of the school year. This count establishes the baseline measure for that school.
 - i. Please do not conduct counts during weeks with special walking or biking-related events, such as Walk to School Day.
 - ii. If your SRTS program is conducting any events during the first three weeks of the school year, please attempt to conduct travel counts before the SRTS event.
 - b. A count should also be conducted during the last three weeks of the school year (i.e., during May). This count measures the change in travel behavior during the school year. If a mid-year count (see below) was conducted, this end-of-year count can also be used to evaluate the sustained effect of activities.
 - c. Mid-year counts are not required, but might also be useful:
 - i. A count conducted within 2-3 weeks of the completion of educational events or encouragement and enforcement campaigns can be used to measure immediate effects of these activities.
 - ii. A mid-year count can also be used to understand the seasonal variation in levels of walking and biking to and from school.
4. Counts can be entered into the Student Travel Behavior Report Access database or Excel spreadsheet available at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/downloads/. *(The database and spreadsheet are under development and should be available for download in late September, 2006.)* These reports can be used for local purposes, and made available to the National Center for Safe Routes to School at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/ for the National SRTS Tracking Program.
5. Note that this form has a blank column. This can either be left blank or used to collect some type of locally or state-desired information. Examples include helmet use, students' desire to walk or bike, etc.

Parent Survey

The Parent Survey is intended to collect information from parents about how their children travel to and from school, what barriers there are to walking or biking to and from school, and their attitudes about walking and biking to school. This information has numerous uses, including understanding the overall environment for walking and biking to school, why children don't walk or bike to school, and how attitudes change as a result of SRTS programs.

Local SRTS programs should be particularly interested in this information because it can be used to help them identify issues that need to be addressed to improve their SRTS activities. Information from parents might also identify unexpected opportunities to increase walking and biking to school.

The Parent Survey form is designed with three potential means of administration (specific instructions for each approach are below):

- First, it can be handed out or placed in backpacks for students to take home, deliver to parents, and then have the students return to their teachers. The survey should take between 10-15 minutes to complete.
- Second, it can be given to parents to complete while they are waiting before parent-teacher conferences.
- Third, it can be assigned as part of a homework assignment, where the student would take home the form and fill it out as part of an interview with the parent.

The parent survey should be conducted twice during the school year. Exact timeframes are listed, and these should be followed when the survey is administered using the take-home method. But when the survey will be administered in conjunction with Parent-Teacher Conferences, the local SRTS program manager and teacher(s) should determine the best time to administer the survey.

- a. To collect baseline information, parents should be surveyed during the second, third, or fourth week of school.
- b. Parents should also be surveyed at the end of the school year to collect information about how attitudes and beliefs have changed during the year.
- c. A local SRTS program might also want to conduct the survey sometime during the year.
 - i. A survey conducted within 2-3 weeks of the completion of educational events or encouragement and enforcement campaigns can be used to measure immediate effects of these activities.
 - ii. A mid-year survey can also be used to understand the progress and early effects of long-term programs, as well as other variation in parental attitudes that affect walking and biking to and from school.

[Alternate One] **Take-Home Administration Instructions:**

1. Please distribute copies of these forms to teachers for each classroom, so that all parents will receive a copy of the survey.
2. Collect forms from teachers weekly for a two-week period after the surveys have been sent home.
3. Information from the forms can be entered into the Parent Survey Results Report Access database or Excel spreadsheet available at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/downloads/. *(The database and spreadsheet are under development and should be available for download in late September, 2006.)* These reports can be used for local purposes, and made available to the National Center for Safe Routes to School at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/ for the National SRTS Tracking Program.

[Alternate Two] **Parent-Teacher Conference Administration Instructions:**

1. Identify when parent-teacher conferences will occur and determine whether these times of the year are appropriate to collect baseline information and end-of-year information. (If the times do not seem appropriate, a take-home methodology might more successful.)

2. Distribute copies of the survey form to teachers for each classroom, so that all households will receive a copy of the survey during (or immediately before) the parent-teacher conference. (Note that teachers will be responsible for distributing and collecting surveys, and then returning the completed surveys to the local SRTS program manager.)
3. Ask teachers to provide forms to parents/caregivers so that they can fill out the forms while they wait for the conference.
 - a. A sign with simple instructions next to the stack of forms may help explain the process.
 - b. Teachers may collect forms during their conference.
 - c. Parents may also complete the survey after their meeting with the teacher.
 - d. Teachers may allow parents to take the surveys home and send them back with the students. If this approach is followed, teachers should request that the forms be returned within a few days, and set a specific date. (Note that this approach will likely reduce the number of surveys that are returned.)
4. Collect forms from teachers weekly for a two-week period after the surveys have been sent home.
5. Information from the forms can be entered into the Parent Survey Results Report Access database or Excel spreadsheet available at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/downloads/. *(The database and spreadsheet are under development and should be available for download in late September, 2006.)* These reports can be used for local purposes, and made available to the National Center for Safe Routes to School at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/ for the National SRTS Tracking Program.

[Alternate Three] **Homework Instructions:**

1. Please distribute copies of these forms to teachers for each classroom, so that all parents will receive a copy of the survey.
2. Teachers can assign the surveys to be filled out as part of a homework assignment. The student would take the survey form home and fill it out during an interview with their parent, or along with their parents.
 - a. Other homework approaches can also be used, as long as the recommended form is used, and the parent provides the answers.
 - b. In many instances, curriculum changes or new homework assignments require approval from the principal or a curriculum committee. Local SRTS programs considering the homework approach should check on this potential issue early.
3. Collect forms from teachers weekly for a two-week period after the surveys have been sent home.
4. Information from the forms can be entered into the Parent Survey Results Report Access database or Excel spreadsheet available at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/downloads/. *(The database and spreadsheet are under development and should be available for download in late September, 2006.)* These reports can be used for local purposes, and made available to the National Center for Safe Routes to School at www.saferoutesinfo.org/tracking/ for the National SRTS Tracking Program.